Center for Biblical Theology and Eschatology

Introduction

Israel is a word that is found in Scripture over 2500 times, and because of its critical importance to the church in coming to a sound understanding of God's Covenant Promises, it carries great significance. Was the Lord's promise of an everlasting inheritance made to a middle eastern nation of geopolitical and genealogical stature, or was that promise made to an Israel that is an elect, diverse, and spiritual people? To be sure, there are those who believe that the land, peace, prosperity, freedom, and everlasting Kingdom reign, was promised to the literal progeny of Israel. They believe that this can only be fulfilled by the literal seed of Jacob inheriting physical promised land. But is the Israel of God defined by genealogy, or does being a true Israelite encompass anyone born of thee Seed, which is Christ? Is the Israel of God defined by having a blood relationship to Jacob, or is it defined by having a blood relationship with Christ? These are all pertinent questions that should not be lightly esteemed, nor brushed aside with tired old self-serving platitudes, clichés, or colloquialisms.

Indeed we must ask ourselves (*in light of Scripture*), is it even possible that such a glorious and eternal promise could be fulfilled in such an earthly Covenant and kingdom? Is the Kingdom of the New Covenant Congregation a "Plan B," or is the grace of the New Covenant with Israel the means by which God is fulfilling the old Covenant? There is only one way to arrive at the truth of these questions, and that is by trusting the word of God itself. There are essential interpretative rules to understanding biblical eschatology. The first is that the Bible is the inerrant divine word of God, and thus absolutely and fully authoritative. The second is that, being the divinely inspired word of God to man, it is its own interpreter of what was said. The Scriptures are the ultimate and final authority that determines the faithfulness of the doctrines held by the church. Sound exegesis will come only by our first understanding this principle both effectually, and intellectually. Relying on what our teachers and leaders think is right, or by blindly following popular authors, will never lead to consistent doctrines that are in total harmony with Scripture. Only in rightly dividing the word of truth will we discern what was being prophesied in God's promises to Israel, and what He has declared was fulfilled by Christ. Our interpretive paradigm must

start with the "absolute" that the terms "Jews and Israel" must ultimately be defined by the word of God, and not by secular history or modern day understanding.

With this in mind, this study will examine this important issue, in the illuminating light of the divinely inspired Scripture. We begin this exposition in the book of Romans, chapter nine. There the Apostle Paul deals with this very question of "The Promises made to Israel." God here answers the objection against the truth that the Jews were judged. The question is, if the promises were to Israel, why then has Israel rejected Christ and come under this judgment?

The Israel of God!

by Tony Warren

In Romans, chapter nine, we see that Paul is in great sorrow for his brethren, the Israelites, because he understood that their rejection of Christ has left them blinded and without a deliverer. In the light of this development, and because of the promises that God had made concerning Israel, it would appear that those promises have been abrogated. Paul is addressing the objection, "*if both the Jew and the Gentile have salvation by faith alone, and the majority of Jews have come under judgement and are fallen, how then can God be seen as the Savior of Israel*?" But in verse six he answers the question plainly and succinctly, demonstrating that God's promise to Israel to save them is a true and trustworthy promise. It has most certainly been faithfully kept. Paul is testifying that he is "a living witness" to its faithfulness. In this chapter we see illustrated how Israel will be determined by the sovereign good will and of God, not by the precepts of man, nor his inclinations towards vain genealogies.

Romans 9:6

- "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For they are not all Israel, which are of Israel."

It's not that God has forsaken His word (promise) to Israel, it is that the nation didn't understand that promises. Paul (under divine inspiration), understands something that even many theologians in our day of New Testament enlightenment do not really comprehend. They may give lip service to it, but in practice they effectively deny it. It is the truth that, "*they are not all Israel which are of Israel*." In making this distinction, God is unambiguously making known that the identifying characteristic of the true Israel of God, is not the flesh, but the Spirit. This is an important

revelation about the promise. Its fruition is found in the sovereign electing work of God, not in any genealogical descent. We should not overlook the fact that if it were of descent, then this statement of God would be untrue. Paul (under inspiration of God), is declaring that the eternal covenant of God, was not to Israel after the flesh, but was to spiritual Israel, which is a nation made up of all those who are born of the Seed, Christ Jesus. He is the true Israel of God.

We answer in the afirmative that God has an everlasting Covenant with Israel. And yes, they are all His Chosen People, His Children, His Holy nation set apart for the service of God. These are undeniable fundamental truths of Scripture. But the fundamental question is, "are we defining Israel as God defines Israel in this verse, or are we defining Israel according to tradition and man made parameters?" Paul knows that Judgment has come upon the physical nation of Israel. For blindness in part has happened to them (*Romans 11:25*) wherein they are without God's light, and sit in spiritual darkness. So as a nation, they no longer 'typify' or represent God's Covenanted kingdom people. This congregational representation of the Kingdom, ended with the judgment at the cross. The congregation of the Lord will now be represented by the New Covenant Kingdom, the church. As expressed in passages found in books like Matthew.

Matthew 21:42-23

- "Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the Scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?
- Therefore say I unto you, ***The kingdom of God shall be taken from you, and given to a <u>nation</u>*** bringing forth the fruits thereof."

The judgement of Israel was that the light of the kingdom was taken from that nation, and the kingdom representation would now be found in another nation, which we call the church. The literal, or physical Holy Temple in Israel would no longer be the representation of the body of Christ, the church now represents the Holy Temple. Christ, being the chief foundation stone of that Temple, the head of the corner, was not defeated when Israel rejected Him. He would still be the corner stone of that building, but not in the physical nation of Israel. When the veil of the Holy Temple (which separated the Holiest), was rent or torn in two from top to bottom, that symbolized the fall of Old Covenant Israel as representing the Children of God. The instant that Christ died (Matthew 27:51, Mark15:38, Luke 23:45), this Temple veil was torn in half from top to bottom. At that moment, the old Covenant Israel Temple "type" was fulfilled or completed by the anti-type, which is Christ's flesh. This signified that the children of Israel could only enter the Holy Temple by this new (meaning, unknown to them) and living way, the death of Christ. The Old Covenant Temple with its earthly ways and means (which were but a shadow of this reality) in the services of priests, merely prefigured the true Priest, who was Christ. He is the true way for God's children to be made right with God, that they may receive the kingdom. The Old Covenant with Israel is passed away in the sense that the fulfillment in the New Covenant, had now come. The efficacy, which the Old Covenant ceremonial laws prefigured, was in the death of Christ.

Hebrews 10:19-20

- "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
- By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, ***through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;"***

The Israel of God was not established by a Temple made with hands, or veils made of cloth, but it is established and fulfilled in the body of Christ. He is the Holy Temple, His flesh is the true veil through which we can approach the Holy. It is only the Seed Christ, that truly made anyone the Israel of God. Being born the progeny of Jacob didn't make anyone true Israel (Romans 9:6). If we be in Christ, then we are in Israel, because being in our Lord Jesus Christ is the only way to make anyone a Holy nation wherein they may find Peace and Safety, and wherein God is truly glorified.

Isaiah 49:2-6

- "And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;
- And said unto me, ***Thou art my servant, O Israel, in whom I will be glorified.***
- Then I said, I have laboured in vain, I have spent my strength for nought, and in vain: yet surely my judgment is with the LORD, and my work with my God.
- And now, saith the LORD that formed me from the womb to be his servant, ***to bring Jacob again to him,*** Though Israel be not gathered, yet shall I be glorious in the eyes of the LORD, and my God shall be my strength.
- And he said, It is a light thing that thou shouldest be my servant to raise up the tribes of Jacob, and to restore the preserved of Israel: I will also give thee for a light to the Gentiles, that thou mayest be my salvation unto the end of the earth."

This Israel that will bring Jacob to God is clearly Christ, not a political nation in the Middle East. That nation was merely the example, the picture, a 'shadow' of the true inheritance which would be in Christ. Just as the Old Covenant Holy Temple was merely the shadow of the true, which is Christ. When the Lamb inherited Judah, we inherited the land in Him. The children of God receive a spiritual inheritance, which many theologians have confused with an earthly one. All nations, both the remnant Jews and the Gentiles alike, are joined to the Lord to live and reign with Him, and have part in His inheritance. It's not a reward of a plot of dirt, but the reward of being sons of God.

Zechariah 2:10-12

- "Sing and rejoice, O daughter of Zion: for, lo, I come, and I will dwell in the midst of thee, saith the LORD.
- And ***many nations*** shall be joined to the LORD in that day, ***and shall be my people:*** and I will dwell in the midst of thee, and thou shalt know that the LORD of hosts hath sent me unto thee.
- And the ***LORD shall inherit Judah*** his portion in the holy land, and shall choose Jerusalem again."

These are spiritual truths that, through His Holy Spirit, God illuminates by light of Scripture. Only those who are in Christ truly have inheritance of that Spiritual land, while those who reject Christ (even though they may be Jews in the flesh), are not Jews "in God's eyes." It's not outward, in the flesh. This is why Romans chapter nine clearly delineated, "*..not all of Israel, are Israel*." This is an explicit declaration that Israel was not a geopolitical or genealogical people, it was a remnant which were a spiritual people. They had to be in the Son, Christ Jesus, in order to be considered the true Israel of God who by His death have been delivered from bondage of sin. The Old Covenant prophecies prefigured these things.

Exodus 4:22

- "And thou shalt say unto Pharaoh, thus saith the Lord, ***Israel is My Son, even my Firstborn:"***

The nation Israel was the 'type' that represented Christ, the firstborn Son of God, wherein the true children of Israel would be delivered from bondage. The nation was called God's firstborn only because it was a shadow (1st Corinthians. 10:4-7), a visible representation of this true Israel of God, Christ. It represented the body of Christ, the firstborn of God in Him. Indeed, the nation was also called the firstfruits because Christ is the Firstfruit. The nation was called the chosen because Christ is the Chosen. The nation was called sons because Christ is the Son. In other words, it is only in Him that these titles come to fruition. Inheritance isn't by fleshly birthright, but the birthright that comes from being born again in Jesus. He is the firstborn from the dead.

Certainly none of these things were mere coincidence, they're God breathed prophecy and testimony to the mystery of God, and to the truth. Israel was 'typed' as the son because they represented those who would be born from above in the Son. Through Him they/we become children of God. In Him have they become true sons of God. All true believers, no matter what nation (Hosea 1:10) they may come from, are sons and children of Israel. The external or corporate congregation, signified the true Israel wherein true Salvation would be found.

Hosea 11:1

- "When Israel was a child, then I loved him, and called My Son out of Egypt."

Again, compare that verse with Scriptures which speak of the Child Jesus Christ going into Egypt. We begin to see God's 'Clear' declaration that this was the fulfillment (*completion*) of that Scripture regarding Israel and Egypt. Speaking of Christ, we read:

Matthew 2:15

- "And was there until the death of Herod: that it might be ***fulfilled*** which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying, out of Egypt have I called My Son."

Christ was the true Son Israel, called out of Egypt. Israel, the nation being called out of Egypt merely prefigured Him. Many theologians choose to disregard such passages (*and many others*), but the fact is, they all consistently and unwaveringly tell the fundamental truth about Israel, its captivity, deliverance, and how this was a 'type' of how God's people are delivered from bondage in Christ, the Israel of God. The fulfilling of the Covenant promise of inheritance in this Israel. He is the dwelling place of all those who have been set free from spiritual bondage. When we are brought out of bondage to sin, it is equated with Israel being brought out of bondage to Egypt. The Spiritual parallels are unmistakable. Christ, the Israel of God was tempted (*tried or tested*) in the Wilderness 40 days (*Mark 1:13*) just as the nation Israel was tempted in the wilderness 40 years (*Deuteronomy 8:2*). Another example to illustrate that Christ is the Son Israel (*Matthew. 2:15*) that was called out of Egypt, the reality of the shadow which prefigured Him. It is pointing to the fact that without Christ, no one will be made free from their bondage. Our Lord made this clear as he reasoned with the Jewish people about their spiritual captivity. The lesson being, not one of Israel would be free, except through the Son.

John 8:35

- "And the servant abideth not in the HOUSE for ever: ***But the SON*** abideth ever.

John 8:36

- "If the Son shall make you FREE, ye shall be free indeed."

The servant is he who is in servitude, but the Son is the inheritor. Consider wisely what is being said here. Israel can only be free from servitude or bondage to sin, 'in the Son' (*Christ*). They must be brought out 'in Him' by the new and living way, which is through His flesh, or else they abide not in the house of God forever. Just as Israel was promised to be brought out of Egypt. And God kept His promise in the Seed, Christ. Likewise, Jesus is telling these that the promise will be kept and they can be set free from bondage, but only in the Son. If they abide not in the Son, they abide not in the house of Israel forever. They will be cast out and the kingdom given to another.

Genesis 21:10-12

- "Wherefore she said unto Abraham, Cast out this bondwoman and her son: for the son of this bondwoman shall not be heir with my son, even with Isaac.
- And the thing was very grievous in Abraham's sight because of his son.
- And God said unto Abraham, Let it not be grievous in thy sight because of the lad, and because of thy bondwoman; in all that Sarah hath said unto thee, hearken unto her voice; for ***in Isaac shall thy seed be called."***

As explained as an allegory, pertaining to the two Covenants with Israel. The Old Covenant with Israel, and the New Covenant with Israel.

Galatians 4:22-26

- "For it is written, that Abraham had two sons, the one by a bondmaid, the other by a freewoman.
- But he who was of the bondwoman was born after the flesh; but he of the freewoman was by promise.
- Which things are an allegory: for these are the two covenants; the one from the mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, which is Agar.
- For this Agar is mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children.
- But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Christ is the Seed of the Promise, anyone not in the Son (Christ) will be cast out. And this is what Jesus was saying to the Jewish people by telling them that they needed to be made free in the Son, and only in Him could they abide in the House, forever. That literal Jerusalem in the Middle East is what God declared in Galatians was still in bondage with her Children (as they are even to this day), but it is the Jerusalem 'from above' which was free. It is this Jerusalem that is the mother of us all, because it is the Holy City of an Israel that is far superior to a genealogical blood line, or a pile of bricks purported to be a Holy Temple of God. Our Lord illustrated that physical Israel remains servants in bondage in Egypt, and wouldn't abide in the house unless they were set free. The picture of John chapter 8 illustrating, the Son has inheritance, but the servant works. And works will not get anyone inheritance. If they reject the Son of God (*which is Israel, the House in which they must abide in*), they cannot be free. For no one can be God's Israel, and reject Israel, the Son. It is a contradiction of terms. That verse (John chapter 8) carries the pertinent message of just how, "*if they abide in Christ, then they abide in the house of Israel forever. Else, they abide not.*" And if the Son in the House make them free, then are they free from the bondage (*servitude*) to sin, and abide in Israel.

This is also what Paul delineates in Romans Chapter nine when he said, "*..they are not all Israel which are of Israel*." i.e., all do not abide in the House or tabernacle that is Christ, therefore they cannot truly be the Israel of God's defining. There is a remnant Chosen by Grace (*Romans 9:27*) that are the Israel of God, but as God unambiguously stated, there are also some that are not Israel, even though they are (in the humanistic sense), 'of' Israel (the genealogical nation).

And so the first conclusion that we come to is that anyone who makes the claim that all Israel (*the nation*) will be saved, or that the Israel of God is the earthly ethnic nation, or the Jewish people, or that Israel of the promise is by heritage or blood line, have directly contradicted God's Word that Israel is not defined by God in this way. The key phrase in that sentence being, defined "by God." Men define Israel as all those of that blood line, but God says clearly, Israel of the promise is 'not' defined as a nation, since they are not all Israel that are of the nation Israel. It's a remnant of the nation that are Israel. ..more on this later.

Nevertheless, the question remains, "*what about all those promises God made to Israel? Have those promises become null and void, and has the word of God become of none effect concerning them*?" And Paul is answering the objection unequivocally, "no." The promises are not become void or non effectual, but we must wisely understand just which Israel the promise of the everlasting Covenant was made with. Which is precisely why God declared that, "*they are not all Israel, which are of Israel*." God is telling us that just because they were born of Israel, and are of Jewish origin, does not make them God's Israel.

From these verses we glean that Israel in God's eyes, is more than a race, it is a Grace. It's being in Christ that determines if a child is of the New Covenant that God has established with Israel. We should have no delusion about exactly what is being said. The children have to be born from above in Christ Israel, in order to be the Israel of God. Without being in Christ, they're children of the flesh, and not children of God. They are Israel of the flesh, not the Israel of God. And those aren't my words:

Romans 9:6-8

- "Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect. For ***they are not all Israel, which are of Israel:***
- Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: but, ***In Isaac shall thy seed be called.***
- That is, ***They which are the children of the flesh, <u>these are not</u> the children of God:*** but the children of <u>the promise</u> are counted for the seed."

So while many theologians joy in obstinately declaring that "*Israel is Israel, and that's all there is to it*," God has something to say about that. And with authority He speaks through His Holy word. The children of the flesh are 'not' the Israel of God. But the Children of the promise are counted as the seed. Why? Because they are of the Seed, Christ. Thus we are called Israel, who were once called Gentiles (ephesians 2:11), and His people, who were once not His people. How much clearer can it get?

Romans 9:24-27

- "Even us, whom he hath called, ***not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?***
- ***As he saith also in Osee,*** I will call them my people, which were not my people; and her beloved, which was not beloved.
- And it shall come to pass, that in the place where it was said unto them, Ye are not my people; there shall they be called the children of the living God.
- Esaias also crieth concerning Israel, Though the number of the children of Israel be as the sand of the sea, a remnant shall be saved:"

So though in our day we are deluged with rhetoric that is contrary to Scripture, we should keep in mind that this is not what I, or any other theologian says. It is God Himself who is declaring that all those of the literal nation Israel, "are not Israel." It is God who is declaring that only a remnant are, and that those of the promise are counted as the seed, or the children. These are God's Words, and He will be the one who decides just who is truly the Israel of God, and who are merely 'of the nation Israel.'

Considering all these things, and reading them in context, it is no mystery why we read that Paul is in sorrow for His kinsmen (according to the flesh *verse 3*). His kinsmen whom God used to "signify" the adoption, the Glory, the Covenant, the giving of the law, the service of God, and the promises that pertain to Israel. They were a sign. Paul is sorrowful for them because he understands that those without Christ, are without promise. And he knows that blindness has happened to them, and that they sit in darkness and remain in unbelief. They are under wrath of God, but this also doesn't mean that the word of God had become of non-effect concerning Israel. For Paul knows God shall indeed Save all Israel. But (as he so

unambiguously stated) they are not all Israel which are of Israel. God will save the Israel that abideth in the house or tabernacle, Christ. When God clothes men with this house, then the fulfilling of the promises to Israel are made manifest.

Of course, you can go to any number of vaunted theological authorities and hear them preach how Israel is defined by borders, by nationality, or by genealogical lineage. It has become a church passion in our day to define Israel, not by God's Word, but by history and tradition. Some have even gone so far as to make the claim that "*the whole literal nation*" will be saved. These people are simply not reading carefully, and receiving what the Scripture actually says. They don't understand that the Israel of promise is not defined by men. The Israel that these promises are fulfilled in, and that the everlasting Covenant is with, is a far different nation than the 'type', which prefigured it.

God in the very same fashion defines the children of God (*the seed of Abraham*) not as literally being of the flesh the children of God or the seed of Abraham, but of the Spirit. Just as He so clearly said that many of those who were 'literally' of the seed of Abraham, were "not" really of the Seed of Abraham. How can that be? Only because God is defining terms, and the Bible is its own interpreter.

John 8:39

- "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham."

Again, though they were clearly Abraham's seed literally, in God's definition, they were 'not' Abraham's children at all. Likewise, those who are spiritually Israel are those of the promise, not those of the flesh 'literally' Jews. Or to put it another way, Jewish people most certainly are Abraham's seed, but it (*being Abraham's seed*) is not the determining factor of who is of Abraham's Seed, ***to whom the Promises were made.*** God is the authority, not man.

Romans 9:7

- "Neither, because they are the seed of Abraham, are they all children: ***but in Isaac shall thy seed be called."***

God is plainly telling us that just because Abraham was literally their progenitor, or just because they literally could say they are direct descendants, that didn't mean that God defined them either as his Seed, or as children of God. Even many moslem countries are the seed of Abraham (*literally*) but Flesh/Blood line is not the determining factor of who truly is a child of the promises that God made to Abraham's Seed. Despite what some theologians may do, God's Word is the ultimate authority, and it is very clear on this matter. They are not children of God just because they have Abraham as their literal progenitor, because God says it is in Isaac that thy seed shall be called, and that points to Christ "Thee Seed!" He is Seed of Abraham in whom the promises that were made, of the nations being blessed in Him, would be fulfilled. Once again we see the illustration that Abraham's Seed, which was Israel, "is truly Christ," and only those who are in Him qualify (*in God's eyes*) for the promises. None other. The same contrast that we saw before of God's definition of Israel verses man's definition. In man's way of thinking (carnally), he looks at people born in Israel or of Jewish heritage, and he surmises that "*these are the Israelites*." And indeed, yes, they are. But not the Israel of God, which is of the everlasting, unconditional, Covenant promises.

God made the literal nation promises concerning the land, this is true. But they were 'conditional' promises, and were all fulfilled. It's really important to distinguish between the conditional promises made to the literal nation, and the unconditional promises (wherein nothing was required), which was made to the Israel of God. It's the difference between the "representation" of the Old Covenant, and the New Covenant with Israel.

This language of "*In Isaac shall thy seed be called*" speaks to all the believers in Christ, whether they be Jew or Gentile. As we saw before, this goes back to Genesis chapter twenty one, where Abraham had fathered a son by a bond woman named Hagar, and also fathered a son by a free woman named Sarah, which things were an allegory and clearly explained to us in Galatians 4:22-31. Read it with relation to Genesis 21:12 and learn what it means. The free Woman is the Israel of God made free by being in Christ. It is the Covenant Children of Grace called unconditionally, and this is why she has more children than the bond woman. The phrase, "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," refers to this. Understanding this, we better discern what Romans 9:7 is speaking about when it 'references it.' It's talking about all that are in Christ, Israel. And note the seed of Isaac, is Jacob (Israel), in whom we become Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise.

Likewise, the next verse of Romans chapter nine continues in this exact same vein of how God defines terms, versus the way man would want to understand them. God says:

Romans 9:8

- "That is, they which are the children of the flesh these are ***not*** the children of God: but the children of the promise are counted for the seed."

We have read this before, but the question is, have we heard it? The Jewish people of that nation are, of the flesh, the children. But clearly God says, just being born of the flesh Jewish does not count as making you the Children of God, but being born of God will. For then will 'God' count them as the true seed. Not Israel of the flesh, but the Israel of the Spirit. The Promises are not made null and void, but the promises were not to a literal nation Israel, but to 'a people' Israel. And they are through Christ's Spiritual kingdom (*John 18:36*) which is not of this world.

Nevertheless, many theologians will go to great lengths insisting that in Scripture, there a difference between "Jew," "Hebrew" and "Israelite." And it indeed was true that in the beginning, "Jew" referred to anyone from the tribe of Judah (from whence comes the word). However, it is clear that now these terms are used synonymously. Even in our day these three terms still refer to anyone who is part of the Jewish people. And the word of God confirms this truth, as it uses all these terms interchangeably in the New Testament. The Jews are both Israel, and the Hebrews.

Acts 21:39

- "But Paul said, I am a man which ***am a Jew*** of Tarsus, a city in Cilicia, a citizen of no mean city: and, I beseech thee, suffer me to speak unto the people."

Philippians 3:5

- "Circumcised the eighth day, of the ***stock of Israel,*** of the tribe of Benjamin, ***an Hebrew of the Hebrews;*** as touching the law, a Pharisee;"

Paul, under divine inspiration of God, clearly proves that He is a Jew (even though he is of the tribe or family of Benjamin), an Israelite, and a Hebrew. Any denial of these truths is nonsensical, considering the authority of Scripture. I fully realize that some theologians become resentful and offended by any witness to Scripture that says these things about Israel. But that attitude is a lot like saying, "*I don't care what God says, this is what I will believe*." But if we can toss any Scripture out the window that doesn't agree with our church traditions or views, or that doesn't fit into the doctrines we have been taught, then we become 'our own authority,' and God's Word becomes secondary to what we believe. This is the great error permeating today's church. Nevertheless, Romans chapter nine is unambiguous. No theologian invented it to distort Dispensational or Premillennial doctrines, its always been the inspired unadulterated word of the living God. This phraseology doesn't mean that Jewish people are not the children of

God (obviously since the Apostles were Jewish), what it means is that being Israel in the fleshly sense, is not the hallmark of one who is of the promise. Being Israel spiritually in Christ, is.

I do not deny that there may be many well meaning theologians who read about the promises God made to Israel of the land, and sincerely believe that "*God owes Israel (the literal nation) the everlasting land because that was the promise.*" But this idea comes from erroneous or sloppy exegesis, traditional seminary training, self serving TV evangelists, political biases, or those who mold and lead Scripture rather than receive and follow it. God has fulfilled 'all' of the promises that He made to the nation Israel. Not in man's eyes perhaps, but in His own eyes He has. And His eyes are the only eyes that really count. Every single promise, which God made to Israel about the inheritance of the physical land, were 'conditional promises' and were totally fulfilled. The promises of an everlasting inheritance, Kingdom, and Covenant were 'unconditional Promises' and these were to the Israel of God, the true election in Christ.

Nehemiah 9:8

- "...and ***madest a Covenant with him to give the land*** of the Canaanites, the Hittites, the Amorites, and the Perizzites, and the Jebusites, and the Girgashites, to give it, I say, to his seed, ***and Hast performed thy words;*** for Thou art Righteous:"

Is God's Word made null and void by church tradition or seminary training? Indeed, can it be that the Lord has misunderstood His own promise in speaking thusly? God forbid! God speaks "authoritatively" and we must not trample His word under foot in order to hold on to old Judaic, or Dispensational type eschatology in support of what theories authors might propagate. God has kept His promises to Israel concerning the land. For the promises of the literal land to that nation Israel was never unconditional, nor could it be everlasting (as required in the New Covenant with Israel) since this earth will someday be destroyed.

Deuteronomy 8:18-20

- "But thou shalt remember the LORD thy God: for it is he that giveth thee power to get wealth, that he may establish his covenant which he sware unto thy fathers, as it is this day.
- And it shall be, if thou do at all forget the LORD thy God, and walk after other gods, and serve them, and worship them, I testify against you this day that ye shall surely perish.
- As the nations which the LORD destroyeth before your face, so shall ye perish; because ye would not be obedient unto the voice of the LORD your God."

The Covenant Promises of the literal land of Canaan to that nation Israel were never unconditional, and those theologians who make such claims only show a real lack of knowledge of both the Scriptures, and the promises. The land given to Israel was conditional, and God made that very clear to them many times. He also made it clear that He is no longer obligated, and has fulfilled His promises to them. It's only the indoctrinated teachers of Premillennialism (*having become more politically minded than biblically minded*) who have decided that God hasn't kept all of His promises of what He sware to their fathers. In their arrogance, they insist that God hasn't given them rest, peace, nor delivered their enemies into their hand as He promised. But when we search the Scriptures diligently, to see what God has to say, we see that the truth is a bit different from man's theologies.

Joshua 21:43

- "***And the Lord gave unto Israel all the land which He sware to give unto their Fathers;*** And they possessed it, and dwelt therein.

- And the Lord gave them rest round about, ***according to all that He sware unto their fathers:*** and there stood not a man of all their enemies before them; the Lord delivered all their enemies into their hand.
- ***There Failed Not Ought of any good thing which the Lord had spoken unto the house of Israel; <u>All Came To Pass</u>".***

According to the word of some prominent theologians, God hasn't yet keep all the promises that He had made to their fathers, but according to 'the ultimate authority,' which is God's Word, He didn't fail in one single promise that He made to the fathers of Israel concerning the land. Thus God owes Israel nothing. He fulfilled all that He sware He would do concerning the land. It was clearly never an unconditional promise, and so when they forsook God, His judgments came upon them, and their enemies around them conquered them. Scripture is abundantly clear on this point.

On the other hand, the promise to Abraham "and" his Seed, was not a promise of 'literal' land. God says the Seed in view in that promise was 'not' the nation, but Christ. And that is the inheritance which was unconditional (not based upon works), and that Covenant was everlasting. So though many spend volumes trying to confuse the issue, let us not confuse the unconditional promises to Abraham and 'HIS SEED' (*Christ*), with the conditional promise of the literal land to the people of Israel.

Galatians 3:16

- "Now unto Abraham and his Seed were the promises made. He saith not, unto seeds, <u>as of many</u>; but as ONE, and to thy Seed, ***Which Is Christ.***
- And this I say, that the covenant, that was confirmed before of God in Christ, the law, which was four hundred and thirty years after, cannot disannul, that it should make the promise of None Effect."

Not a promise to seeds (Plural, the nation of Israel) but to the Seed Israel, which is Christ. God is alerting us to "make no mistake," it was not a promise to a literal nation, but was a promise to "One." This is the unconditional promise to Israel. Unconditional because we cease from our works, being justified by His work. He is the Seed in whom all the nations would be blessed, it was not of a literal land, but of the spiritual inheritance of the "Promised Land" in Christ. An inheritance that is far greater than any hallowed ground in the middle east. An everlasting Covenant that Christ confirmed (strengthened) in His blood (*Hebrews 9:15-17*), not a temporal deed to a plot of disputed land. Inheritance in this Kingdom is infinitely more glorious. Christ was not interested in being a King of a worldly throne as was 'typed' in Old Testament rulers like David and Solomon. Now is His (and our) Kingdom not of this 'type.' Now is His Kingdom not of this world, but of a habitation in heaven far greater. For as He is not of this world, neither can His Kingdom be.

John 18:36

- "Jesus answered, My kingdom is not of this world: if my kingdom were of this world, then would my servants fight, that I should not be delivered to the Jews: but now is my kingdom not from hence."

John 8:23

- "And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world."

The world's kingdoms are physical, earthly, temporal, and of men. But "now" Christ had instituted a Kingdom that is not of this world, but of an eternal nature through His Spirit. Christ has defeated the prince of this world by His death (Hebrews 2:14), and has risen to rule as King from a spiritual throne. This is a new kingdom, which will never be overcome. And we, having been risen with Him, have been translated into the dominion

of this Kingdom. Not an earthly Kingdom of Israel, but a Spiritual Kingdom of Israel (Christ). And that's not theological rhetoric, that's all Biblical, authoritative fact.

Colossians 1:12-14

- "Giving thanks unto the Father, which hath made us meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light:
- Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, ***and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son:***
- In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"

We have been delivered from bondage to the kingdom of Satan, and the worldly powers and controls that corrupt, and translated into Christ's Kingdom. Thus we have rule over the enemy (Luke 10:17-19), and reign on this earth in the Spirit of Christ. The Israelites wanted a Messiah who would rule from a literal earthly throne, and fight the Roman occupiers, but Christ came as a Messiah whose victory comes over the power of death, which wasn't very appealing to them. In point of fact, Satan offered Christ the earthly Kingdoms (which was in his power to do), but Christ rejected them because the Kingdom He came to rule in was far superior, and built upon pillars, not of earth, but of righteousness, and cannot be moved.

Luke 4:5-7

- "And the devil, taking him up into an high mountain, shewed unto him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time.
- And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.
- If thou therefore wilt worship me, all shall be thine."

Here we see the prince of this world, and his power over earthly Kingdoms. Christ rejected such rule, because He is not of this world, but of Heaven. The Jewish people then (as Premillennialists today) attempt to make Him an 'earthly King,' but He departed into the mountain (John 6:15) alone to illustrate that was not what He was about. His Kingdom was in mount Zion, and He alone would suffer to secure that Kingdom for the Israel of God. By dying and ascending to that spiritual throne, the promises to Israel are kept. If we are regenerated, or born from above in His body, His seed remains in us that as He reigns, we reign in Israel.

1st John 3:8-10

- "He that committeth sin is of the devil; for the devil sinneth from the beginning. For this purpose the Son of God was manifested, that he might destroy the works of the devil.
- Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God.
- In this the children of God are manifest, and the children of the devil: whosoever doeth not righteousness is not of God, neither he that loveth not his brother."

This New Covenant inheritance of Israel is far greater than a conditional or merited one, and is a promise which the law cannot disannul or make of void. It's one of unmerited favor of God because it's in Christ, the advocate who came to fulfill (*complete*) the law. In this Seed Israel, we are not under the law (Romans 6:14), we are as dead to the law and live under Grace.

So when Paul says in Romans 9:6 that it is, "*Not as though the word of God hath taken none effect*", it is because the promises to Israel indeed are kept. But the children of the flesh are not the Israel to whom these unconditional promises were made, and that is why they sit in a prison house of darkness, and are blinded. Only a remnant is the Israel of God. We must understand that being a Jewish person doesn't make anyone the true elect, faith in Christ does. We 'should' know this inherently just by being of the Spirit and reading Biblical history. The blessings of the promises come to Israel by faith, not by genealogical descent.

Galatians 3:26-28

- "***For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus.***
- For as many of you as have been baptized into Christ have put on Christ.
- There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are ALL ONE in Christ Jesus."

That is not the rhetoric of theologians, that is God's Word defining just who the children of God are. And this should be obvious since Paul testified that many of the Jewish people (besides for the remnant) are in unbelief and cut off like branches from the Olive tree. The true Jews (of which Paul was one) are God's chosen people 'only' as they are in Christ. Jews and Greeks, Blacks and Whites, French and Germans, whosoever has put on Christ, has put on Israel, and is an inheritor of the promises made to Abraham concerning the inheritance.

Galatians 3:26-28

- "And if ye be Christ's then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

We inherit all the promises made to Abraham ***through Christ.*** Paul is declaring, no, those promises were not made non effectual, nor have they been abrogated, but the Israel of God is defined by God, and not by vain genealogies (Matthew 3:9, John 8:38-40), Titus 3:9).

Some theologians (no doubt realizing the inconsistency of their teaching) argue that, "*..yes, Galatians chapter 3:26 refers to the church, but that's not speaking of Israel*." They claim the church is not the seed of Isaac. They argue this because to accept that would make their theories about this chapter, untenable. But careful study reveals that this is where the phrase (*Genesis 21:12-22:18*), "*and in thy seed shall all the nations be blessed*" and "*in Isaac shall thy seed be called*," comes from. The seed of Isaac is Israel (Jacob), is it not? The only other alternative is the seed Esau. We know that cannot be true, because God hated Esau. And so if we are being true to the word of God, and to logic (not to mention being honest with ourselves), then "In Isaac shall thy seed be called," can only refer to Israel (Jacob) the seed of Isaac. To qualify as a true Jew in the sight of God we have to be circumcised not in flesh, but in heart (Romans 2:28-29), and we would have to be of the Seed of Isaac, who is Jacob. And clearly, "Christ alone" redeemed Jacob on the cross, making them all, "sons of God."

In this great truth we can also get a better understanding of the term, "*Jacob have I loved, and Esau have I hated*." It's because Jacob represented the Kingdom of Christ, Israel, and the Election whom God loved and sent His Son to die for. And Esau represented the kingdom of Satan, the reprobates. Jacob is the Seed Israel, in whom all the nations of the world would be Blessed. And that is what the phrase in Romans chapter 9 signifies. Israel was the son of Isaac, a 'type' of Christ, the Israel of God.

In point of fact, before Jacob and Esau were born to Isaac, they struggled against each other in the womb, and God told Rebecca that ***two nations*** were in her womb. These two nations symbolized the kingdom of heaven (Jacob), and the Kingdom of this world (Esau), which are at enmity with each

other. One ruled by their prince, Satan, and the other by our Prince, Christ. This struggle in the womb between Israel and Esau was a sign (*token*) of that struggle between good and evil. We are either of this world, or we are not of this world. The seed of Isaac was Jacob, the son whom God loved. All roads lead to the same conclusion. The nation Israel was a shadow [*skia*] signifying that struggle between kingdoms. Jacob's name [*yaaqob*] means supplanter or circumventer, and was given him because his hand gripped the heel of his brother Esau. As indeed Esau himself understood, declaring in Genesis chapter 27.

Genesis 27:36

- "And he said, Is not he rightly named Jacob? for he hath supplanted me these two times: he took away my birthright; and, behold, now he hath taken away my blessing. And he said, Hast thou not reserved a blessing for me?"

Jacob was the supplanter because he came last, but was chosen and made the first, the power of God over Esau. God signifying this changed Jacob's name to Israel [*yisrael*], meaning, the power of God. This title is from the Hebrew root words [*sarah*], meaning power (Genesis 32:28, Hosea 12:3), and [*'el*], meaning God (Genesis 49:25; Hosea 11:9). This title bestowed upon Jacob because his posterity would represent the children of God who would prevail over the kingdom of Satan in the power of Christ.

Genesis 32:28

- "And he said, Thy name shall be called no more Jacob, but Israel: for as a prince hast thou ***power with God and with men,*** and hast prevailed."

God wrestled with man, and man prevailed. The nation Israel was a representation of the power of God in man, that He prevails. Christ is the Prince that has the power of God with man, that he prevails. The true Israel that was brought out of Egypt (Matthew 2:15), the true chosen of God (1st Peter 2:4), the true Son of the Father (2nd John 1:3), though the literal nation was called all these things prefiguring Him.

And so we can begin to get a little better understanding of how the promise is fulfilled. Paul is telling us that, just as it was in Elijah's day, there was a remnant chosen by Grace now. He understood that Israel of the promise would be a remnant, defined by God. Being the Humble servant that he was, he 'accepted it,' receiving it as the word of God that it was. As contrasted to many today who arrogantly would rather argue with God about what He promised Israel. I'm sure in Paul's heart was the love of, "*not my will, but Thine be done*." Paul was sorrowful for his Jewish kensmen, but he was also faithful. He knew 'all Israel would be saved,' but it will not be all Israel according to the flesh, but all Israel according to the promise.

The error of theologians thinking that the 'type' could continue its literal significance after the antitype, is a death blow to sound hermeneutics, and shows a serious lack of Biblical scholarship. And the idea that race or lineage somehow meant everything to God, is exactly where many of the Jewish scholars made their mistake when Jesus walked in Jerusalem. They thought that just being born Jewish, and keeping the works of the law was enough. They were looking for an earthly, political king to come and fulfill the prophesy. The Jews expected Christ to defeat the Roman empire, and to create a restored nation of Israel that would rule with power. Thus they missed the point completely. While Christ preached of the death of Messiah, they were disappointed because they looked for a physical restoration, and to them a crucified Messiah must have seemed the pessimism of defeat.

Though they didn't understand, Christ did come as King. He did come to rule the Kingdom Israel. He did come to build again the Temple. He did come to set the captives free. He did come to end their warfare and to bring Peace and righteouness to Jerusalem. Indeed, to the ends of the earth. The Judaizers simply didn't understand because they were carnally minded, and thus looked at everything in the way that the world looks at things. Even

the disciples didn't understand in the beginning. Though Christ had plainly told them that He came to bring Peace, not as the world gives it, but a different kind of Peace, they still didn't understand that He came to bring a Peace that passeth understanding. A Peace defined by God, not by the world's dictionary. Even though He plainly told them that His Kingdom was not of this world, but was a spiritual kingdom, and even though Christ gave parable after parable defining what the Kingdom of God was like, they hadn't yet been given the ability to grasp what He meant. Even though He plainly told them that He came to set them free, they still didn't understand by what captivity they were being held in bondage. Even though He plainly told them that He must suffer and die, they still didn't comprehend what He was declaring or why. But they would receive power to discern these things as the Spirit of truth was poured out at Pentecost, and they would go forth as witnesses unto this Spiritual kingdom, and to these truths, to the ends of the earth.

Sadly, the exact same thing is happening today in a growing number of churches, as teachers and pastors are again looking for the Kingdom of Israel to be manifested and fulfilled literally on the earth. They look for the temple to be rebuilt literally, and for sacrifice to take place in the temple. Some are even waiting for Elijah to physically return. The more things change, the more they remain the same. As said the preacher, "*There is nothing new under the sun*." The literal nation Israel, the literal sacrifices, the circumcisions, the temple, all these things were examples and shadows and are passed away with the coming of Christ. They were pointing to a better Holy Nation, a better Sacrifice, a better Priesthood, a better Circumcision, and a better Temple. Why would anyone look again to the type, when it was fulfilled in Christ?

Galatians 6:15:

- "For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature. And as many as walk according to this rule, Peace be on them, and Mercy, and ***upon The Israel Of God."***

God's "inclusion" of the Gentiles does not speak against His promises to Israel. It is not a doctrine of replacement theology, but of inclusion theology. Because true Israel was always God's people by faith, and by birthright in Christ. Being a son of God was always being born in Christ a new creation, by faith. Salvation was never by national heritage, or by Jewish blood line, except it was by the blood of Christ. It doesn't matter if you are circumcised, or not circumcised, and it doesn't matter if you are a Jew in the flesh, or not. Because if you are in Christ, you are a Jew, a son of Israel, the elect or Chosen of God, and heirs according to the promises. That Spirit in you is what makes you circumcised in heart, the circumcision made without hands in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh (Colossians 2:11), by the seed of Isaac. Not the ceremony of circumcision in the flesh, but the personal relationship in the spirit. Christ came to the physical Jew first, and then to the Gentiles, and He has reconciled all together "as one," in Himself, with God. There is only one people of God, and God does not discriminate by race.

Romans 2:10-11

- "But glory, honour, and peace, to every man that worketh good, to the Jew first, and also to the Gentile:
- For there is no respect of persons with God."

In a certain sense, these theologians are right. But it is not in the sense that they surmise. For Israel indeed has special promises, and the Jews are the chosen people, and they are exclusively the children of God. But they're wrong in assigning this "Israel of God" as a geopolitical nation, or as a literal tribe of Judah. No, it's a spiritual nation made up of all tribes, a special people in Christ. It's easy to give lip service to God having one body and one people. But in reality, many are not making the distinction between Israel after the flesh (1 Corinthians 10:16-18), and the indivisible Israel of God (Galatians 6:15-16). God's Word does make this distinction. The Reprobate Jews who have rejected their Messiah, are certainly Israel after the flesh,

but they are not the Israel of God, after the Spirit. They are not the true children of God. Christ Himself made that clear in His equating God to Abraham, and his children to these people of Israel.

John 8:39-44

- "They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham.
- But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham.
- Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; ***we have one Father, even God.***
- ***Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me:*** for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me.
- Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word.
- ***Ye are of your father the devil,*** and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it."

Clearly, God is equating Abraham's children, to the children of Israel, and declaring that these are not God's children, else they would not reject Christ. ..but they did reject Christ. This signifying again, there are two types of Jews. (1) Those who are Jews ***by the Spirit*** of God in them, (2) and those who are Jews only in the flesh.

I don't deny there are physical Jews of Israel that are part of the physical seed of Abraham. The question is, why do so many deny that there are spiritual Jews of Israel, which are part of the spiritual Seed of Abraham? Especially when the Holy canon so clearly teaches this? God's Word will define who is the true Jew, who is the true Israel, and who are the true chosen people.

Romans 2:28-29

- "For he is ***not a Jew,*** which is one outwardly; neither is that circumcision, which is outward in the flesh:
- but ***he is a Jew, which is one inwardly; and circumcision is that of the heart, In The Spirit, and not in the letter;*** whose praise is not of men, but of God."

Here is one of the most re-interpreted, mangled, and maligned passages in Scripture. What does this verse actually say? Not what does someone explain to you it means, but what does it really say? The unadulterated truth is that it declares unambiguously that someone can be born Jewish according to the flesh, and yet in 'God's definition' he is not a Jew at all. Clearly, being born a Jew on the outside (in the flesh, literally) is not what determined who was a Jew (and thus who receives the promises to the Jews), in God's eyes. The children are Jews of God, by being Jews inwardly, in the spirit. The Jew of God doesnï¿½t refer to a nationality, or to a race, it refers to anyone who is Spiritually a Jew [*Yahuwdiy*], evidenced by God's declaration that national Jews were not necessarily Jews (God's people [*Yahweh*]), except they be saved. Except they were raised up in Christ, they were not true Jews according to the Spirit. While some will reluctantly admit that the Christians are Jews (Godï¿½s people), they will deny they are Israelites. However, God uses the terms Jew and Israelite synonymously. In Romans 2:28-29 God uses the word Jew in the sense of His Spiritual people, not those who are the progeny of Jacob, and He declares true circumcision was the state of a man's heart, not of his ceremonial heritage. Before the antitype, the literal circumcisions were representative of Israel having their sins cut off by the shedding of blood. But as Christ, the antitype, was manifested, we see the true circumcision are those who have their sins cut off in Christ, that they have a changed heart. These are the true Jews, and the true circumcision. And Paul illustrates this same truth as He declares.

Philippians 3:3

- "For we are the circumcision, which worship God in the spirit, and rejoice in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh."

There is no reason to think that there is respect of persons with God, as the flesh means nothing. Those in Christ are accounted the 'true' circumcision, and the true Jews.

So while vaunted theologians, teachers, and authors indoctrinate many in these misinterpretations, and boldly declare that when the Bible refers to the Jews and Israel, it refers exclusively to physical Jews or to the physical nation, we see God makes no such declarations. In His understanding, a Jew is not a Jew by the flesh, but by the Spirit. And that Spirit is the Spirit of Christ. So whether man accepts it or not, no one receives the promises to the Jews by blood line, except it be by the blood of Christ. Anyone claiming they are Israel by physical heritage, and not by Christ, will have a rude awakening when they stand before the throne. As indeed the Lord told the church at Philadelphia of such imposters.

Revelation 3:8-9

- "I know thy works: behold, I have set before thee an open door, and no man can shut it: for thou hast a little strength, and hast kept my word, and hast ***not denied my name.***
- Behold, I will make them of the synagogue of Satan, which say they are Jews, and are not, but do lie; behold, ***I will make them to come and worship before thy feet, and to know that I have loved thee."***

God speaking to the church says that he will make those who claim they are Jews, come to worship before the feet of the church, those who have not denied His name, and to know that this is who He loves. This is the true Election, the church who stands not on ceremony and genealogical merit, but on the name and faith in the finished work of Christ. Anyone can ignore, or wrest Scriptures to suit their own purpose, but faithfully "receiving" what God declares is an 'evidence' of true salvation.

Romans 2:26

- "Therefore if the uncircumcision keep the righteousness of the law, shall not his uncircumcision be counted for circumcision?"

In other words, if God wants to say that a Gentile is of 'the circumcision' because he keeps the righteousness of the law, in Christ, shall today's theologians arrogantly retort, "*no, we will not receive such declarations about who is counted the circumcision*?" Humility is submitting to the authority of God's Word, understanding that it is His sovereign right to do this. Truth is not found in the latest book of pastor John, nor of this years best seller by Rabbi Phelps, nor is it in my words, or the words of Dr. Ihavea Ph.D. Truth is found in God's Word faithfully kept. Thus a Jew is who God says a Jew is, not whom man declares he must be. Christ is reigning now as King of the Jews, as already He established His Kingdom of Israel. And completing this task, it is evident that He didn't fail in any point that this Kingdom would have to be postponed. His success is our success as a church, thus we are part of that kingdom that He established. Not part of a Kingdom that is an intangible, or that is only in our mind, but of a 'real' substantive spiritual Kingdom of both 'substance' and power.

Revelation 1:9

- "I John, who also am your brother, and companion in tribulation, ***and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ,*** was in the isle that is called Patmos, for the word of God, and for the testimony of Jesus Christ."

Christ never came to set up an earthly government, kingdom, or reign, He came to set up a Spiritual government, kingdom and reign. His kingdom is not of this world, but is a kingdom city of a Jerusalem from above. This is the Jerusalem that He has brought Peace to, that our warfare is accomplished or is finished within. The only true Holy City, Christ.

Revelation 3:12

- "Him that overcometh will I make a pillar in the temple of my God, and he shall go no more out: and I will write upon him ***the name of my God, and the name of the city of my God, which is new Jerusalem, which cometh down out of heaven from my God:*** and I will write upon him my new name."

Again, it is 'somewhat' understandable how some well meaning individuals could come to the erroneous conclusion that the people living in Israel today are defined by God as His "chosen people." It is understandable how they think Jerusalem today is a holy city, or that the people there are the holy nation, kingdom of priests, and the peculiar treasure of God. Because God used these terms for them in the Old Testament (*Exodus chapter 19:5-6*). Yes, God said that about Israel, and therefore many feel justified in thinking 'that proves it.' What they don't take into account is that Old Testament Israel was an example, a representation, a 'type' of the body of Christ, and the congregation of the Lord. But they rejected their Messiah and Saviour, and blindness (*God's Judgment*) has come upon them, wherein they are no longer the visible representation of the children of God, and are not the elect or chosen, anymore. Being Elect means being in Christ, and Israel (*in part*) does not qualify.

The congregation of God on the New Covenant side of the cross is the church. They (Jew and Gentiles alike, in Christ), are the Chosen people, the Holy nation, a Kingdom of priests, a peculiar treasure, and the Covenant people. The Old Testament nation Israel was corporately (externally) the blessed people, but that never meant that all were God's chosen. Just as today the church is God's children, but it doesn't mean that everyone in your/my external church is really saved. Salvation is on an individual basis, a personal relationship with Christ. So corporately all those in the church are spoken of as 'the church,' but in truth, only select individuals in the corporate church "really" are the true church. Just as Scripture says that "they were not all Israel, that are of Israel." The exact same principle of the external Covenant relationship applies to the New Covenant church. One Israel is of God, but the corporate nation Israel was the representation. Being children of God entails more than being called Israel, or being called the church, it is having been born of God, that we have Israel dwell within us. The Kingdom of Israel is not coming, it's already here. Just because some groups cannot physically see it, does not mean that it's not here. As indeed, Christ also taught:

Luke 17:20-21

- "And when he was demanded of the Pharisees, when the kingdom of God should come, he answered them and said, ***The kingdom of God cometh not with observation:***
- Neither shall they say, Lo here! or, lo there! for, behold, ***the kingdom of God is within you."***

Comparing Scripture with Scripture, we allow the Bible to do the convicting in what God has to say about all this. We let the author tell us exactly what Israel is being spoken about in the book of Exodus. God will tell us what Covenant or promise with Israel is in view? In 1st Peter, God addresses the church and says:

1st Peter 2:9-10

- "But ye are a ***chosen generation,*** a royal Priesthood, an ***Holy Nation,*** a peculiar people; that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into His marvelous light:
- which in time past were not a people, but are ***now The People OF God:*** which hath not obtained mercy, but now have obtained mercy."

God had always declared that national Israel was the chosen generation (the family of God), the kingdom of Priests, the Holy Nation, the peculiar (purchased or acquired) people of God. And corporately or visibly they were Israel. But more importantly, a remnant of them were spiritually the Israel of God. Because Exodus and 1st Peter are talking about one and the same Israel of God. The Promises to Israel in Exodus, are to "The Israel of God." Compare 1st Peter with Exodus chapter 19:6 which speaks of the Covenant with Israel, and you will see what Israel is in view. That is why Paul asked the rhetorical question, "*was the word of God made of none effect*?" The answer is no, because these promises to Israel will be kept. But not with the literal nation, with a remnant of the nation (of whom Paul declares He is one) chosen by Grace. So while it may appear to many to be talking about promises to the literal nation of Israel, it was actually a promise to those who have part in the New Covenant of Grace, the true Israel, Christ. Those of the Old Covenant were saved by the very same Grace, through the very same faith, looking 'forward' to the finished work of Christ. Those in the New Covenant are saved by Grace, looking 'backward' on the finished work of Christ. Both saved the same way, having the same faith, but approaching Christ from different directions. They all have part in the very same 'one body,' the holy nation of Jews whose Jerusalem is from above and not of this world (Galatians 4:26; Hebrews 12:22). The very same Holy Nation 1st Peter tells us 'all true believers' enter into.

The question always boils down to if we are going to receive God's Word, or are we going to detour and follow after the traditions of our teachers or leaders. In whom do we put our trust? God's Word, or man's word? When we consider God's precepts, it soon becomes abundantly clear that the Israel of promise, is an elect 'remnant' people, not a physical nation.

Jeremiah 31:31:

- "Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, that I will make a New Covenant with the house of Israel, and with the house of Judah:"

God declares a New Covenant (Testament) with Israel and Judah. That's pretty clear isn't it? What is also clear is that we (the church) are the New Covenant congregation. Now the New Covenant "is with Israel," and we are the New Covenant congregation, so what gives? If you bring this verse (*and its obvious agreements with other verses*) to the attention of many of the dispensational theologians, they will generally retort without really answering. But how are we the New Covenant church grafted into the one Jewish Olive tree (Covenant Israel), without being Israel? They have no sound reply for these contradictions. But this is who the New Testament or Covenant that Christ confirmed, is with. The New Covenant/Testament is with Israel. It's an agreement or solemn Promise, and it was strengthened in Christ's blood (Hebrew 9:17-18). Unfortunately, there are many professed Christians who have already made up their mind, and thus just don't want to be confused by the facts. In other words, the truth makes them uncertain of what they have been taught (confuses them) and they'd much rather feel comfortable in their error. Yet Examine these things carefully for yourself. That's talking about the Old Testament/Covenant with Israel, and the New Testament/Covenant with Israel (*Testament and Covenant are the exact same words*.) Those verses in Hebrews 9:17-18 tell it all. The Old Covenant with Israel needed strengthening, as there was no man that could by the law be saved. And so that is why there is a New Covenant made with Israel that is by Grace and fulfills the requirements. The New Covenant with Israel instituted by Christ's shed blood is in full agreement with all others Scripture, such as what we read in Jeremiah:

Jeremiah 31:33

- "But this shall be the Covenant that I will make with the house of Israel; After those days, saith the LORD, I will put My law in their inward parts, and write it in their hearts; and will be their God, and they shall be My people."

What New Covenant is this? With sound hermeneutics, it can 'only' be the New Covenant in Christ, the Seed to whom the promise was made. Christ is the House of Israel whom the Covenant is with, and the corporate (external) Congregation is the visible representation. God says the Old Covenant with Israel was not perfect, and Jesus came as the Mediator of a New Covenant, a ***better Covenant*** having been strengthened in Christ's Blood. But again, let's get this directly from the word of God. Let God be true and every man a liar. God tells us how to define terms, and understand prophecy. The New Covenant fulfillment is spoken of again in Hebrews:

Hebrews 8:6-8

- "But now hath He obtained a more excellent ministry, by how much also He is the ***mediator of a <u>better</u> Covenant,*** which was established upon better promises.
- ***For if that FIRST Covenant had been faultless, then should no place have been sought for the second.***
- For finding fault with them, He saith, Behold, the days come, saith the Lord, when I will make a New Covenant with the House of Israel and with the House of Judah:"

A direct quote from Jeremiah chapter 31, and proof positive that this New Covenant talked about there, is the New Covenant church, and Christ, its New Covenant Mediator. And if you read honestly, and with all readiness of mind, through Hebrews chapter 8, 9, and 10, you will see 'unequivocally' that this is the same Covenant with Israel spoken of in Jeremiah. Check all those Scriptures yourself. There should be no question at all about this because it's so clearly written, and so by the text so obvious. ***but*** there will be questions, because blindness is a spiritual sickness. In some quarters, people just will not receive the love of truth of God's Word witnessed word for word. We have to come to the realization that many will cling to traditional beliefs no matter what the Scriptures plainly declare. God can say something is white, and there will be vaunted theologians who will sit down for hours until they can rationalize it away, and then write great books about how this verse really means it is black. But for the man of God, thoroughly equipped with the Spirit of truth, this can't get much plainer. The New Covenant is with Israel, the church in Christ. Clearly, Hebrews chapters 8-10 are a commentary on the Jeremiah chapter 31 prophecy, declaring it fulfilled in Christ, the mediator of this new Covenant.

"*The Old Testament concealed, is the new testament revealed*."

Chapter 10 explains the New Covenant with Israel spoken about in Jeremiah 31 just as forcefully.

Hebrews 10:14-22

- For by one offering he hath perfected for ever them that are sanctified.
- Whereof the Holy Ghost also is a witness to us: for after that he had said before,
- This is the covenant that I will make with them after those days, saith the Lord, I will put my laws into their hearts, and in their minds will I write them;
- And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.
- Now where remission of these is, there is no more offering for sin.
- Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus,
- By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

- And having an high priest over the house of God;
- Let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience, and our bodies washed with pure water."

Hebrews 12:22-24

- "But ye are come unto mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels,
- To the general assembly and church of the firstborn, which are written in heaven, and to God the Judge of all, and to the spirits of just men made perfect,
- And to ***Jesus the mediator of the new covenant,*** and to the blood of sprinkling, that speaketh better things than that of Abel."

Thus we understand that those New Covenant church saints who are in Christ Jesus, are the Israel to whom He has put His law into their minds, that they have the mind of Christ (1st Corinthians 2:16). They are those whom He has written His laws upon their hearts, and to whom He is their God, and they are His People (Jeremiah 31). Not only of the Jew, but also of the Gentiles as well (Hebrews 9:24-26; Romans 9:24-26).

There is a side note that we should address here. With respect to this prophesy in Jeremiah, there is language there that is difficult for some people to understanding. The verse which declares, "*..they will not need to be taught*." It seems some theologians use this to put forth the idea that this cannot be fulfilled as yet, and so must be fulfilled when Israel is saved. But carefully comparing Scripture with Scripture reveals the truth of its fulfillment, and when Israel "was" saved. ..not will be.

Hebrews 8:11: (with Jeremiah 31)

- "And they shall not teach every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, know the Lord: for all shall know Me, from the least to the greatest."

This verse is no mystery. This is the language illustrating a great "pouring out of the Holy Spirit" that the believers are taught by God. When people hear the word of God, and they "*receive*" it, this is not truly the brethren who have shown them or taught them, it is actually the Holy Spirit of God that is working within them to teach them personally, as it did the Prophets. God moving them both to will, and to do as Scripture states (Philippians 2:13). When Jesus Christ was risen and ascended to the throne, He poured out the Spirit at Pentecost, the great power to guide the New Covenant Congregation into all Truth. Christ spoke of this fulfillment in the book of John:

John 6:45

- "It is written in the prophets, and they shall be all taught of God. Every man therefore that hath heard, and hath learned of the Father, cometh unto Me."

So Jesus Himself ***confirms*** that this prophesy of all being taught was fulfilled. We (the whole world now) are taught of God through Christ. In the old days, a Prophet would receive the Spirit, stand up, and declare, "Thus sayeth the Lord" to the people. But now, we all (true believers) are prophets to a degree, and all have received the power of the Spirit of truth to prophecy. We are all as God's servants and prophets (John 6:45), and all taught of God through the Spirit that dwells within each and every one of us. Confirmed fully by Scripture.

1st John 2:27

- "But the anointing which ye have received of Him abideth in you, and ***ye need not that any man teach YOU:*** but as the same ***anointing teacheth you of all things,*** and is truth, and is no lie, and even as it hath taught you, ye shall abide in Him."

Again, how can it possibly be any clearer. We have the illustration that this is fulfilled, now. We are now all taught of the Lord, all things. Jesus said it quite unambiguously to the apostles:

John 14:26

- "But the comforter, which is the HOLY GHOST, whom the Father will send in My name, ***He shall teach you all things,*** and bring into remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

Those who think the Scripture of us not having to be taught, has not been fulfilled, are not carefully reading Scripture. There was a great blessing poured out at Pentecost, that salvation could go forth to the ends of the earth, and not just Israel. They hear of Christ, and by the Holy spirit of God Himself coming to dwell in their hearts (God putting His law in our hearts, fulfilling Jeremiah), they all know the Lord (1st John 2:4) from the least, to the greatest. Because the Spirit of God has gone out to reveal truth throughout the world. Didn't Jesus tell us that He would come and tabernacle with us and never leave nor forsake us? No one has to teach us, the Holy Spirit teaches us all things through the Scriptures. That is why I often say, the Lord gives us the power to witness, and then He provides the increase. That is what this language of, "*all shall know the Lord without being taught,*" means. All these promises to Israel were fulfilled in Christ. So there is no need to be confused by theologians teaching that this is a miraculous event for the future of national Israel. God says its been fulfilled. And isn't it ironic that the same problem with these theologians keep occurring in history? They are continually teaching that things that God says are fulfilled, are not yet fulfilled. Even as National Israel still looks for the first coming of their Messiah, blinded to the 'fact' that He has already come.

Confusing Romans Chapter 11 (*and so all Israel shall be saved*)

Another chapter that is almost always quoted by those who believe that all (*or nearly all*) of the literal nation Israel will be saved in the future, is Romans chapter 11. It is a chapter which is often misunderstood, and that is seldom examined 'carefully,' or compared with what God has said has been fulfilled in Scripture. This chapter deals with the visible 'representation' of Covenant Israel (*both old and new*), and pictures it symbolically as the olive tree. The Jewish people are signified as the natural branches that grow from that olive tree. In other words, they were the visible Covenant people of Israel before the cross. We read that some of the branches of this tree (*some of the Jewish people of Covenant Israel*) were broken off, and some branches from the Gentile nations were grafted into this Covenant tree. This signifying a New Covenant Israel representation, which is now made up of both Jews and Gentiles alike. i.e., one body.

Notice that God is making the distinction between the natural Olive Tree branches (*the original Covenant people Israel*), and the wild olive tree branches (*sons of God from the Gentile nations*) who now are grafted into this New Covenant 'along with' the branches of Israel not broken off. It's very important to understand this distinction here, because it proves beyond a doubt that the Old Covenant Israel representation has now become a New Covenant with Israel, made up of Jews and Gentiles alike. And this is just as God had promised of old. He would make a New Covenant with Israel.

Going about this systematically, we see one tree 'represents' Covenant Israel, and the other represents the Gentile people. Obviously, if the tree signifies Covenant Israel and the branches are the Jewish people of Covenant Israel, then when the Gentiles branches are moved from their tree, and are grafted into the Covenant Israel Tree with the natural branches, they then become part of that same Covenant Israel. To say anything less is nonsensical, and is to dabble in rank confusion. They've left their Gentile tree, and enter into "Covenant Israel" along with the Jewish branches that were not broken off (The Apostles Paul, John, etc.) in God's judgment. Where is the mystery? It's revealed.

By the same token, those branches broken off (*Jewish people who were not saved, and were blinded*) they are not Israel in God's eyes. In the Biblical vernacular, they have been ***cut off*** from their people. That is the same picture that we saw in Romans chapter 9 where God delineated that, "*they are not all Israel, which are of Israel*." In some theologians' minds they are, but that is not the way God sees it. Some have been cut off from the Olive Tree (*Covenant Israel representation*) and are in spiritual blindness, while some Gentiles have been grafted in that they may also sit at the table with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob (Matthew 8:11), being loosed from 'their' blindness and made to see. Gentile Christians now have citizenship, and are part of the community of the Israel. This includes any Jewish Christians today. Together we make up this New Covenant Tree, the commonwealth or citizenship of Israel. As indeed God so clearly expressed in the book of Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:11-20

- "Wherefore remember, that ye being ***in time past Gentiles*** in the flesh, who are called uncircumcision by that which is called the circumcision in the flesh made by hands;
- That ***at that time*** ye were without Christ, ***being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel,*** and ***strangers from the Covenants*** of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
- ***But now*** in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.
- For he is our peace, ***who hath made both one,*** and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;
- Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;
- And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:
- And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.
- For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.
- Now therefore ***ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints,*** and of the household of God;
- And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;"

Where once we were Gentiles, strangers and aliens (noncitizens) of Israel, we are now fellow citizens, no longer foreigners or strangers from the Covenants of Israel, but fellow saints. One must then ask, just how much clearer can we expect it to get? In Christ there is one salvation program for both the Gentiles and the Jews. It is pride, political agenda, vain genealogies, and Premillennial tradition that promotes the idea that God has two separate salvation plans, and two separate chosen people. But this is utter nonsense. There was one sacrifice, one time for taking away the sins of Israel, one olive tree, one congregation of God, one body, one people, and one deliverance. ..All of which was instituted and established at the cross.

Some facts to consider in this illustration of the Olive Tree.

1. It unambiguously shows that this 'cannot' represent the literal nation of Israel. If it did, that would mean Gentiles were leaving their literal lands from the time of the cross to today, to go live physically in the land of Israel. We clearly understand that is untenable. i.e., we're not being

grafted into the literal earthly or worldly middle eastern land. We are being grafted into the congregation of God, the visible representation of 'Covenant Israel,' which is not a physical nation nor land, but a 'corporate' (external) people of God. A congregation once 'represented' by a nation, but now represented by all nations called in one body of Christ.

2. Likewise, the tree cannot be the Spiritual indivisible Israel of God, of which all are saved. The reason being, they could not be broken off if this Tree represented that Israel. i.e., perseverance of the Saints or the indivisible body cannot have anyone lose salvation. So this tree corporately represents the children of God, for it symbolizes Covenant Israel both on the Old Covenant, and the New Covenant side of the cross.
3. We should not lose sight of the 'important' fact that this is the 'same' Tree of Covenant Israel, but in a New Covenant Israel dispensation, which allows Gentiles to be grafted into it (as read in Ephesians chapter 2). It is important for us to understand what it "cannot" represent, so we may better comprehend what it ***must*** represent. Because this is not a new tree, it is the same root, the same trunk, the same tree, but with some branches broken off, and some Gentile branches grafted in. i.e., illustrating the continuity of the Covenant, which is so well documented in the doctrines of 'Covenant Theology.'

So, the Tree cannot be symbolic of the physical nation Israel, and it cannot be symbolic of Spiritual Israel. Thus it is symbolic of external Covenant Israel. The corporate congregation. That is the only Israel of God that can have people cut off, and also people not cut off, but grafted in. Many in the congregations today (*like many in the congregation of Israel then*) are not truly saved, and will be cut off. Indeed, in verse eighteen of Romans chapter eleven, God warns the New Covenant Gentiles not to boast. In boasting, they are deluding themselves as to responsibility for their Salvation. If they are deceived into thinking that they are better than the Jewish people who fell, then they as a corporate body, will suffer the same judgment. God assures us, they don't bear the Root, but the Root bears them. In other words, we have nothing to boast about, for Christ (the Root) is our help, our strength, the author and finisher of our faith, and we cannot take one ounce of credit for being better than the Jewish people were. For this is the same pride and arrogance that brought down the Old Testament congregation Israel, and will bring down New Testament congregation Israel, if they follow that same dangerous path.

I have covered this all in the "Exposition of Romans Chapter Eleven," so I won't go over all this here. Briefly, the controversial verses that many people either misunderstand, or choose to read into them, are generally verses 25 to 27:

Romans 11:25-27

- "For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in."

The question is, what does the phrase "*Blindness in part has happened unto Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles be come in*" mean? The answer is simply just what Paul has stated prior to this. He says he doesn't want them to be ignorant of the mystery, so he's revealing to them that the Gentiles are to be part of this same Covenant tree of Israel. They will have the same deliverance by the Messiah, and be part of the same "One Body" which is of Christ. This has always been God's plan. That is this mystery that is revealed, and that is how "all Israel shall be saved." ...as it is written.

Ephesians 1:9-10

- "Having ***made known unto us the mystery of his will,*** according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:
- That in the dispensation of the fullness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:"

In the fullness of time, the Gentiles and Jews are gathered into one body in Christ. That is the mystery that was once kept secret, but is now revealed. It will be Jews and Gentiles together as one body, signified by one Olive Tree.

Romans 11:26-27

- And ***so*** all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, there shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.
- For this is My Covenant unto them, when I shall take away their sins."

There is no special dispensation or time for the Salvation of Jewish people after the Gentiles come in. When the fullness of Gentiles come in, so [*houto*] (*meaning, in this manner*) all Israel will be saved. This Greek adverb translated "so" means thusly, or in this manner, and it is an answer to the question "How" all Israel is saved, not "when," as so many people surmise.

Paul doesn't want these Romans to be ignorant of this mystery, nor boastful because of Israel's blindness. Gentiles are fellow heirs with the Jews, yet they cannot boast because Paul's kinsmen were cut off. They should understand that there is one New Covenant Israel, and they stand because of the Root of this tree, not of themselves. The Jews first, and now the Gentiles are coming into the Covenant dispensation, and when the fullness of them be come in, so (*or, in this manner*) all Israel shall be saved. In the manner which was expounded upon by Paul using the Olive Tree analogy. Just as it is written, Israel is saved by the deliverer who came out of Zion.

Ephesians 3:3-6

- "How that by revelation he made known unto me ***the mystery;*** (as I wrote afore in few words,
- Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)
- Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;
- That ***the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and <u>of the same body</u>,*** and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:"

Note, not of a different body, not a separate inheritance, but fellow heirs of the 'same' promises to Israel. They are being grafted into Covenant Israel, and when the fullness of them be come in, thus all Israel will be saved "as it was written." This truth was always there, but it was a secret or mystery. And that is what Romans chapter eleven is likewise declaring. When we read there--as it is written, that alerts faithful Bible scholars to find 'where it is written' and consider it wisely. By comparing Scripture with Scripture, and letting God interpret His own word, we come to the truth of the matter. It is written is in Isaiah chapter 59. Read chapter 59 verses 16 to 21. In fact read as it goes into the next chapter 60 and speaks about the light to the Gentiles. How can anyone think this is not referring to the time of the cross? This is not referring to a future Salvation program for Israel, but the current one. And we cover all this in our Romans chapter Eleven Exposition.

This verse in Romans references the verse in Isaiah. And just as it was written in Isaiah (and referenced here), the deliverer did come out of Zion, and He took away the sins of Israel (Jacob). The blood of Christ cleansed us from sin as He hung on the cross. Gentiles also come into this Covenant with Israel, and that is the mystery revealed. When fullness of them come in, so or 'thusly' shall all Israel be saved. Not then (*meaning, after all the Gentiles are saved*), but so or thusly all Israel shall be saved. The manner being the Gentiles now coming in along with the Jewish remnant, chosen by Grace.

The time of Salvation for all mankind, both Jew and Gentile, is Now. To declare to anyone of Israel the Jewish fable of a future Salvation plan, is to play a cruel hoax upon them. Love is in the truth, not in saying "peace, peace, when there is no peace." Not in parroting smooth words in order to stroke their vanity or ego. As Christ said when He was anointed and began His ministry, "*Now is the acceptable year*." The Time to be grafted back

into this tree is now. Not after the tree is completed and full with Jews and Gentiles. Because when the fullness of the Gentiles has come, it's too late. The tree will be complete, and the testimony finished.

If Christ is Israel, and we are the body of Christ, then we are the body of Israel. It isn't rocket science. God wants us to know these things. That's why we are exhorted in 2nd Timothy 2:15 to Study to show ourselves approved unto God a workman that doesn't need to be ashamed rightly dividing the word of truth. These words are not put there so we can practice our reading skills. God wants us to Study and Learn. But man in his stubbornness often thinks that he is correct in his thinking, no matter what Scripture says. Nevertheless, God's thoughts are not man's thoughts. Man has an idea in his head about what Scripture means, and often it takes the proverbial jackhammer to dislodge it. Christians need to start leaning upon the word of God, and forsake our teachers' invalidated words. Unfortunately, just the opposite is happening in our day. But if we let the Scriptures tell us, then we know we are on the right path. Love of the Jewish people is manifested in telling them the truth. It is not in our perpetuating Jewish fables of earthly Kingdoms and delusions of grandeur. Jesus is coming again to judge, for He already came as the Deliverer out of Zion, and King of Israel. Don't take my word for it (*don't take any man's word*), search the Scriptures. For in them we learn of Him.

John 12:13:

- "Took branches of Palm trees, and went forth to meet Him, and cried, Hosanna: Blessed is the King of Israel that cometh in the name of the Lord. And Jesus, when He had found a young ass, sat thereon; ***AS IT IS WRITTEN, fear not daughter of Sion:*** Behold, thy King cometh, sitting on an ass's colt."

The deliverer out of Sion (Zion) that Romans chapter eleven talks about is fulfilled. How many times must man read it before he realizes Christ already came as King of Israel, He already established the kingdom of David (Acts 2:29-32). The Deliverer out of Zion has already taken away sin from Jacob. The people are translated from the power of darkness into His Kingdom (Colossians 1:13, Revelation 1:9, Revelation 1:6, Revelation 5:10) and reign on earth as living proof. Romans chapter eleven says Christ fulfilled this prophecy of the deliverer from Zion 'as it is written (Isaiah 59:19-21).' Not that He will fulfill it, He has fulfilled what was written. The Redeemer or deliverer has come to Zion and them that turn from transgression in Jacob. He has fulfilled His word that "this is My covenant with them." His spirit is upon Israel demonstrated in this Olive Tree that stands as that representative Testament/Covenant He promised. What we read in Scripture is true and authoritative. Thus it is saddening to know that so many indoctrinated into indefensible teachings will generally continue to hold the view Christ must come again as deliverer or redeemer of Israel, because that's the line they have been spoon fed by so many book authors. There are 'few' in our day who will, with all readiness of mind (*as the Bereans of Acts 17:11*), receive God's Word as truth. Was Jesus the King of Israel? Indeed He was! In Romans chapter eleven Paul knows how the Jews are to be saved. If only people would read the chapter in context they would know also.

Romans 11:14

- "If by any means I may provoke to emulation them which are my flesh, ***and might save SOME of them."***

Paul is saying he hopes some of the Jews will see his works and seek to emulate him that some of them might be saved. He knows and understands that their Salvation is now. He knows that there is a remnant to be gleaned now. Those who hold that Christ is coming again to take away sin (Romans 11) do a disservice to His ***completed or Finished*** work on the cross. And those who think that He will rule in Israel cannot have read verses like Matthew chapter 22 verses 1 to 14 which tell a very different story than these great authors and theologians. Have these theologians read verses like Luke Chapter 20:9-18. By God's Spirit and word of truth we can be sure of what they do not mean. They do not mean that when God is finished that, He will be coming back again to be the deliverer of a literal Kingdom of Israel in the Middle East. The whole premise is flawed, tortuous of Scripture,

and untenable. The New Covenant with Israel is that of which the fullness of Gentiles come into, and when this fullness be come, thus all Israel will be saved. Did not the travelers' say clearly:

Matthew 2:2

- "Saying, Where is He that is born King of the Jews? For we have seen His Star in the east, and are come to worship Him."

To say Jesus will come in the future as King of the Jews is to deny that He is a king, and to that end was He born. Lest we forget, the prophecy was of Christ setting up an 'everlasting' Kingdom (only by the Cross), and yet these theologians attempt to make it an earthly one. Yet there is only one Kingdom that shall never pass away. Christ came first to the literal nation Israel, and now magnificently, through their unbelief Salvation comes to all the World, that not only the Jewish people but Gentiles as well may come in. What a great and glorious blessing. And when the fullness of them be come in, All Israel will be saved, as it is written, the deliverer out of Zion shall take away their sins. That's the way it was written and that's the way it was done, a fulfilled agreement, a confirmed Covenant. Thinking that Jewish descent or genealogy will save Israel, is delusion. Much as the Israelites deluded themselves when Christ warned them of this over two thousand years ago.

Matthew 3:7-9

- "But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?
- Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance:
- And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that ***God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham."***

Jesus is warning the Jewish people not to count on their genealogical descent, for God can make children of Abraham out of whatever He so chooses. The true Israel of God is made up of 'living stones' that are raised up by God. It is an Israel of faith, not genealogy. If one were to say that the Gentiles cannot be the Israel of God, I would most assuredly agree. As Scripture is abundantly clear on the point that believers are no longer Gentiles when they are born of God. For His seed remains in them. The church is not a Gentile bride, it was grafted into the Jewish olive tree to become one with the natural Jews that are not cut off (Romans 11).

One thing we can know truly is that when Christ returns, it will not be to save all the literal nation of Israel, or to establish an earthly Kingdom, it will be to rapture the Kingdom of Christ that was established at the cross. The same Kingdom John said he was our companion in.

1st Corinthians 15:24

- "Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power."

The end is at the last trumpet, the last day, when Christ returns to rapture the Israel of God, and to bring Judgment upon those who are not of that 'One body.' God declares that '*Christ is the end of the Law*' (Romans 10:9) and this was a signification of the end of the history of national Israel as the visible representation of the chosen people of God. Israel is now represented in the church of the doctrines of Grace.

Romans 4:16

- "Therefore it is of faith, that it might be by grace; to the end the promise might be sure to all the seed; not to that only which is of the law, but to that also which is of the faith of Abraham; who is the father of us all,"

It is essential to identify and know the true Israel of God, so that we can consider it wisely, and declare its true nature and design. It is Christ in whom we live, and move, and have our being. He is our 'Promised Land' wherein we dwell in Peace and Safety, sealed (secured) by the Holy Spirit of promise. It is in Him that we are a Special people, a Holy nation, a Kingdom of priests who live and reign on earth. We declare Israel's nature and design to the Glory of God, not to the Glory of an earthly people or land. It is not "replacement theology" as some have erroneously labeled it, but a theology of inclusion or of expansion. It's the same olive tree, with branches other than the Jews included. Did the New Covenant Passover (the Lord's Supper) replace the old Covenant Passover? No, it is a continuation of the 'representation' of the broken body of Christ. The Old looking forward to the broken body of Christ, and the New looking backward at the broken body of Christ. Yet they both look to one event 2000 years ago in the sacrifice of His body. Likewise, the Old covenant people of God were 'true' Israel only in Christ, as is the New Covenant congregation. Surely we could say, '*they are not all the church which are of the church*.' For only the true church is the Israel of God. God's Word of the New Covenant with Israel hasn't failed, and it never will. Because it was never to a geopolitical nation, but to an election, chosen of Him from every nation to be a peculiar or special people in Him, from the foundation of the world. Christ, in whom we live and breathe and have our being is the hope of Israel. The flesh means nothing, our creation status means everything. In Him alone are we the chosen people, and the children of Israel. For Christ truly is the only Israel in whom we can dwell in perfect peace and safety.

Galatians 6:15-16

- "*For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision availeth any thing, nor uncircumcision, but a new creature.*
- *And as many as walk according to this rule, peace be on them, and mercy, and upon the Israel of God*."

Peace,

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